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The Top Ten Things to Know About Teacher Effectiveness Policies in North Carolina

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North Carolina's goal is to improve the quality of our teaching force.

The new evaluation instrument, combined with a new standard on student growth, helps to identify concrete areas for teacher development. Under Race to the Top, the Department of Public Instruction is rolling out new face-to-face and virtual professional development to provide teachers with opportunities to improve their craft.

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North Carolina expects that all teachers can help their students grow academically.

The new sixth standard on the teacher evaluation instrument measures the extent to which a teacher's students demonstrate academic growth. Academic growth is the amount of learning that takes place during a school year. Even students above- or below-grade level can still make one year's worth of growth in one year's worth of classroom instruction.

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North Carolina believes that teachers should play an active role in their own development.

Evaluation is no longer something that an administrator does "to" a teacher; it is a process in which teachers are deeply engaged. Teachers will only become more skilled educators if they reflect on their practice, examine the learning of their students, identify areas for growth, and participate in dialogue with peers and evaluators on how to improve.

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North Carolina values teachers in all grades and disciplines.

All teachers contribute to the learning of their students, even if this learning is not currently measured by a standardized assessment. The Department of Public Instruction is bringing together groups of teachers to design innovative measures of student learning in subjects ranging from art to foreign language.

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North Carolina knows that teaching is incredibly challenging work.

Being a great teacher - helping all students gain new knowledge and skills like reading critically, writing persuasively or applying math accurately to real situations - is far from easy. Great teachers work tirelessly. Great teachers constantly improve and have to be disciplined thinkers and strong leaders in their classrooms. North Carolina wants to recognize those teachers who are continuously moving toward excellence.

6

North Carolina is engaging critical stakeholders.

North Carolina has a Teacher Effectiveness Work Group that reviews all policies related to teacher effectiveness and makes policy recommendations to the State Board of Education. The Work Group consists of teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents, research scholars, North Carolina teacher associations, leaders from non-profit organizations, and staff from the Department of Public Instruction.

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North Carolina is moving cautiously with its teacher effectiveness initiatives.

Before a teacher can receive a rating on the new sixth standard, there must be three years of student data used to inform the rating. The use of three years of data safeguards against the statistical problems associated with the use of single test scores to evaluate teacher effectiveness..

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North Carolina wants to develop an environment in which students and teachers can grow.

Teachers should work in an environment that promotes growth. It should include things like observing and being observed by other teachers, collaborative problem-solving with peers, effective professional development and meaningful, regular evaluations from someone whose professional opinion the teacher respects and whose feedback is honest, insightful and beneficial. The environment needs to be trusting and grounded in the belief that students can always learn more and that teachers and schools can make that happen.

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North Carolina believes that all students deserve an excellent teacher.

Teachers who are not proficient on any of the standards of the teacher evaluation instrument will go on an action plan to work toward professional growth. There will be consequences for teachers who do not improve. Failure to act indicates that North Carolina accepts less than quality teaching for its students.

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North Carolina is exploring multiple measures of teacher effectiveness.

The amount of learning that students experience as a result of their time in a teacher's classroom is an important measure of that educator's effectiveness. It is not the only one. Teachers are also members of professional learning communities that strive for good teaching, as well as school communities that work to educate all students.



Public Schools of North Carolina
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